

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1. (Currently amended) A collapsible container, comprising:

a plurality of rigid segments; and

means for connecting the rigid segments such that the rigid segments define a sidewall and such that the rigid segments are movable between an expanded position wherein the rigid segments cooperate with one another to form an object receiving space and a collapsed position wherein a first portion of the rigid segments is arranged so that the rigid segments of the first portion are ~~arranged~~ in a coplanar relationship to one another and a second portion of the rigid segments is arranged so that the rigid segments of the second portion are ~~arranged~~ in a substantially parallel relationship to the first portion of the rigid segments so that the sidewall is in a substantially flattened condition.

Claim 2. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 1 wherein the means for connecting comprises a flexible liner to which each of the rigid segments is connected.

Claim 3. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 2 wherein the flexible liner has an open upper end and a closed lower end.

Claim 4. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 3 wherein the flexible liner is fabricated of a waterproof material.

Claims 5-10. (Withdrawn)

Claim 11. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 1 wherein the rigid segments are constructed of a material selected from the group consisting of ceramic, clay, concrete, plastic, metal, rock, or combinations thereof.

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Claim 12. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 1 wherein each of the rigid segments has an inner surface, an outer surface, and a first of longitudinal edge and a second longitudinal edge, and wherein each of the longitudinal edges is angled such that the first longitudinal edge of one rigid segment abuttingly engages the second longitudinal edge of the adjacent rigid segment in the expanded position.

Claim 13. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 1 wherein each of the rigid segments has an inner surface, an outer surface, a first longitudinal edge, and a second longitudinal edge, and wherein the first longitudinal edge has an inner lip extending therefrom and the second longitudinal edge has an outer lip extending therefrom such that the inner lip of the first longitudinal edge overlaps the outer lip of the second longitudinal edge of an adjacent rigid segment when the rigid segments are in the expanded position.

Claim 14. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 1 wherein the rigid segments have a substantially planar configuration.

Claim 15. (Withdrawn)

Claim 16. (Currently amended) A collapsible container, comprising:

a flexible bottom panel;

a plurality of rigid segments; and

means for connecting the rigid segments to one another and to the flexible bottom

panel such that the rigid segments define a sidewall and such that the rigid segments and the flexible bottom panel are movable between an expanded position wherein the rigid segments cooperate with one another and the flexible bottom panel to form an object receiving space and a collapsed position wherein a first portion of the rigid segments is arranged so that the rigid segments of the first portion are ~~arranged~~ in a coplanar relationship to one another and a second portion of the rigid segments is arranged so that the rigid segments of the second portion are ~~arranged~~ in a substantially parallel relationship to the first portion of the rigid segments so that the sidewall and the bottom panel are in a substantially flattened condition.

Claim 17. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 16 wherein the means for connecting comprises a flexible liner to which each of the rigid segments is connected.

Claim 18. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 17 wherein the flexible bottom panel is a portion of the flexible liner.

Claim 19. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 17 wherein the flexible liner has an open upper end and a closed lower end, and wherein the flexible bottom panel is the closed lower end of the flexible liner.

Claim 20. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 18 wherein the flexible liner is fabricated of a waterproof material.

Claims 21-22. (Withdrawn)

Claim 23. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 16 wherein the rigid segments are constructed of a material selected from the group consisting of ceramic, clay, concrete, plastic, metal, rock, or combinations thereof.

Claim 24. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 16 wherein each of the rigid segments has an inner surface, an outer surface, and a peripheral edge, and wherein the peripheral edge is angled such that the outer peripheral edges of adjacent rigid segments abuttingly engage when the rigid segments are in the expanded position.

Claim 25. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 16 further comprising:
support means positioned in the object receiving space for supporting the rigid segments in the expanded position.

Claim 26. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 25 wherein the support means is a flower pot.

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Cancelled*

Claim 27. (Original) The collapsible container of claim 25 wherein the support means is an insert configured to conform the contour of the inner side of the rigid segments when the rigid segments are in the expanded position.

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Claims 28-40. (Cancelled)